

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: F.

Date: October 25, 2006

Topic: First Review of a Request for a Rating of Conditionally Accredited from Richmond City Public Schools for George W. Carver Elementary School

Presenter: Mrs. Kathleen M. Smith, Director of the Office of School Improvement
Dr. Yvonne Brandon, Associate Superintendent for Instruction and Accountability,
Richmond City Public Schools
Mr. David Ballard, School Board Chairman , Richmond City Public Schools

Telephone Number: 804-225-2865

E-Mail Address: Kathleen.Smith@doe.virginia.gov

Origin:

☐ Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

☒ Board review required by
☐ State or federal law or regulation
☒ Board of Education regulation
☐ Other: _____

Previous Review/Action:

☒ No previous board review/action

☐ Previous review/action
date _____
action _____

Background Information:

The *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia* adopted by the Board in September 2006 Section 8 VAC 20-131.315.C of the standards states:

As an alternative to the memorandum of understanding outlined in subsection B of this section, a local school board may choose to reconstitute a school rated Accreditation Denied and apply to the Board of Education for a rating of Conditionally Accredited. The application shall outline specific responses that address all areas of deficiency that resulted in the Accreditation Denied rating and may include any of the provisions of subsection B of this section.

If a local school board chooses to reconstitute a school, it may annually apply for an accreditation rating of Conditionally Accredited as provided for in 8 VAC 20 – 131-300 C 5. The Conditionally Accredited rating may be granted for a period not to exceed three years if the school is making progress toward a rating of fully accredited in accordance with the terms of the Board of Education's approval of the reconstitution application. The school will revert to a status of Accreditation Denied if it fails to meet the requirements to be rated fully accredited by the end of the three-year term or if it fails to have its annual application for such rating renewed.

Section 8 VAC 20-131-5 of the standards states that the definition of “reconstitution means a process that may be used to initiate a range of accountability actions to improve pupil performance, curriculum, and instruction to address deficiencies that caused a school to be rated Accreditation Denied that may include, but not be limited to, restructuring a school’s governance, instructional program, staff or student population.”

George W. Carver Elementary School is rated Accreditation Denied for the 2006-2007 school year. Richmond City Public Schools has reconstituted George W. Carver Elementary School and is applying to the Board to accept the terms of the reconstitution and change the rating of Accreditation Denied to Conditionally Accredited.

Summary of Major Elements:

During the 2005-2006 school year, the Richmond City School Board and superintendent made the process of restructuring George W. Carver Elementary School a primary goal. School improvement efforts included partnering with the University of Virginia and securing turnaround specialist training for one of the division’s principals and assigning her to George W. Carver Elementary School. Her previous school, J. E. B. Stuart Elementary School, was named a 2006 Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education.

During the 2005-2006 school year, an enhanced accountability plan, a comprehensive professional development plan, an extensive data collection and management plan, and a central office continuous monitoring and support plan were implemented as part of the restructuring initiative. These efforts focused on schoolwide improvement through a focus on instruction, intervention, and remediation for all students.

The second phase of the restructuring initiative will be implemented during the 2006-2007 school year which includes hiring a new assistant principal, replacing 19 of 31 teachers, using instructional coaches to support teaching and learning, and providing specific instructional professional development for the principals.

The request to consider the reconstitution efforts from Richmond City Public Schools for George W. Carver Elementary is included as Attachment A.

Superintendent's Recommendation:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education waive first review and approve the reconstitution application and grant a rating of Conditionally Accredited to George W. Carver Elementary School for the 2006-2007 school year. The local school board must reapply for this status annually in accordance with 8 VAC 20-131-315.C and provide annual progress reports to the Board of Education while the school maintains Conditionally Accredited status.

Impact on Resources:

N/A

Timetable for Further Review/Action:

Staff of the Department of Education will advise the Richmond City Public Schools of the Board’s action.

RICHMOND CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



DEBORAH JEWELL-SHERMAN
SUPERINTENDENT

October 4, 2006

Dr. Mark E. Emblidge, President
Virginia Board of Education
PO Box 2120
Richmond, VA 23218

Dear Dr. Emblidge:

In accordance with Standard 8 VAC.20-131-315 of the Virginia Standards of Accreditation, a school division may seek "conditional accreditation" by application to the State Board of Education. This letter serves as official application from the Richmond City Public School Board and Superintendent for conditional accreditation for George Washington Carver Elementary School.

G. W. Carver Elementary School is a pre-kindergarten to 5th grade school that serves 485 students, of which 98% are eligible for free and/or reduced lunch. During the 2005-2006 school year, the Richmond City School Board and the Superintendent made the process of restructuring G. W. Carver Elementary School a primary goal. School improvement efforts included partnering with the University of Virginia and securing "Turn-around Specialist" training for one of the school division's stellar principals, Mrs. Iris Page, and assigning her to G. W. Carver Elementary School. Evidence of Mrs. Page's past effectiveness is clearly demonstrated in her prior school, JEB Stuart Elementary School, being named a 2006 Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education.

During the 2005-2006 school year, Mrs. Page implemented the first phase of the school's restructuring initiative, which included an enhanced accountability plan, a comprehensive professional development plan, an extensive data collection and management plan, and a Central Office continuous monitoring and support plan to drive school-wide improvement through a focus on instruction, intervention and remediation for all students.

The second phase of the restructuring initiative, which is being implemented during the 2006-2007 school year, includes additional strategies as follows:

- The hiring of a new assistant principal
- The replacement of 19 of 31 teachers
- The use of instructional coaches to support teaching and learning
- The provision of specific instructional professional development for the assistant principals

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Dr. Mark E. Emblidge

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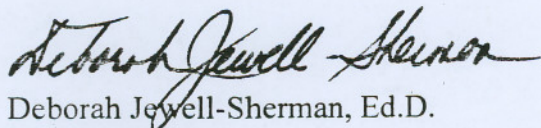
In closing, it is our hope that the comprehensive instructional restructuring initiative undertaken for George W. Carver Elementary and the significant gains made last year will cause you to grant the school the conditional accreditation status being requested.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Should you need any additional information or wish to discuss the matter further, we welcome the opportunity to assist.

Sincerely,



The Honorable David Ballard
Chairman



Deborah Jewell-Sherman, Ed.D.
Superintendent